

# CONTACT

## *Acts of Faith*

An annual contemporary art exhibition exploring the theme of *contact* as it relates to the Hawaiian Islands, its people, and their experiences

### Hawaiian Mission Houses

April 4 – May 4, 2019

Tue – Sat • 10 am – 4 pm

#### Sponsored by

DAWSON  
Office of Hawaiian Affairs  
Hawai'i Tourism Authority  
Hawaii Camera  
Nā Mea Hawai'i

#### In Partnership with

808 Block Walks  
Hawai'i Zine & Book Library  
Hawaiian Mission Houses

**Curated and juried by** Josh Tengan and Ara Laylo

**Cover artwork by** Joshua Iwi Lake

#### Presented by



CONTACT is presented free to the public by Pu'uhonua Society, a nonprofit organization that supports Native Hawaiian and Hawai'i-based artists and cultural practitioners. To make a donation, please visit [puuhonua-society.org](http://puuhonua-society.org).

This exhibition guide was printed,  
with special consideration, by



PROFESSIONAL IMAGE – KAPIOLANI  
Pan Am Building  
1600 Kapiolani Blvd. Suite #120  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96814

We thank them for their generous support.

**Executive Director** Maile Meyer // **Exhibition Manager** Josh Tengan //  
**Exhibition Team** Don Felix Cervantes, Nicole Duarte, Malia Gonzalez,  
Thad Higa, Alec Singer

# Acts of Faith



Drawing of Mission Houses by James P. Chamberlain, c. 1860

**Now in its sixth year,**  
**CONTACT 2019, *Acts of Faith*,**  
asked artists to consider the  
various dimensions of spiritual  
belief — in particular the  
spiritual landscape of Hawai‘i,  
the relationship between  
cultural and religious practices,  
and the legacy of religion (and  
colonization) in the Islands.  
This year’s exhibition features  
a curated selection of site-  
specific art installations and  
interventions presented in  
the Houses. It also features a  
collection of artist books for  
the CONTACT Library, which  
expounds on the the theme.  
While, at times, looking to the  
past, *Acts of Faith* still reflects  
the diverse, complex, and  
contradictory belief systems  
that inhabit the Islands today.



## Ka Hale Kamalani (Chamberlain House), 1831

In 1831, Levi Chamberlain contracted for the building of this structure, which was to be used as a depository. The building was made of coral blocks cut away from the ocean reef, which were dried and bleached by the sun. These blocks were arranged and assembled to build the Chamberlain House. From this location, Levi Chamberlain was able to plan out and undertake the disbursement of provisions for the entire Sandwich Islands Mission.

This selection of work for CONTACT is an intervention into the Museum's temporary Exhibition Gallery, bringing together works which explore Protestant, Kānaka Maoli, and greater Pacific iconography, as well as their associated mythologies, traditions, ideologies, and cultural practices.

**JASON CHU**

*Naton/Burial*, 2019  
digital print

CHAMBERLAIN HOUSE

“

This photo of Roquin-Jon Quichocho Siongco, Chamoru artist and weaver, references the ancient Chamorro burial rituals of Guam's Pre-Latte period (c. 1500 BCE), which were abandoned after Spanish-contact in the mid-16th century CE. During this era, the deceased were adorned with ornaments, including bracelets and necklaces made from shells and teeth, and were wrapped in woven akgak (lau hala) mats. Here, the subject's body is adorned with a mix of traditional, modern, commercial, and artisanal jewelry and is laid upon a mat that was woven by the subject. The work is an exploration and reclamation of traditional cultural practices that had been lost as a result of missionary colonization.

The photo was taken at the SaVAge K'lub Headquarters, part of Honolulu Biennial 2019. SaVAge K'lub takes its name from the Savage Club, the historical gentlemen's club that was first established in London in the 19th century. It draws upon the look of this gentlemen's club but combines both historical objects and artworks with new artworks, performances, and poetry. K'lub members interact with these objects while in the space, taking them out of their usual mode of display and reclaiming them for their originally intended uses.

**JANE CHANG MI**

*The Church of Life*, 2019  
felt banner

“

George Jarrett Helm Jr. was a Hawaiian activist and one of the heroes of the Aloha 'Āina movement. He was also a talented and accomplished musician. When watching him perform or listening to his Hawaiian falsetto, he imparted wisdom not only with his song selection, but with the information he shared with his audience before and after. Helm's Church of Life quote, from his journal entry dated January 30, 1977, reminds us that the 'āina is sacred and our responsibility is to care for the land.

**DREW BRODERICK**

*Creation Myths*, 2019  
bone, coconut lashing, gold

## KC GRENNAN

*Missionary Position*, 2015–2019  
repurposed cabinet, glass, metal,  
thorns, doily, sound

“

*Missionary Position* explores the lasting impact of the missionaries and their descendants on, not just the spiritual, but the social and political landscape of the Hawai‘i. The missionaries fortified their relationships with the ali‘i (chiefly) class and eventually held positions of power and influence in government. Vast economic empires, plantations, and monopolies were built on the foundation of opportunistic land grabs after the Great Māhele of 1848, which privatized land ownership. Descendants of the missionaries prospered across the Islands.

For this, the second iteration of *Missionary Position*, a new sound component has been added, which brings the work into the present day. The soundtrack was made by combining a contemporary rendition of the chant *O Pele o Te Tumu o Tahiti* by Charles Kaupu, with a sermon on the importance of global Christian missions by American evangelist Billy Graham.

CHAMBERLAIN HOUSE



# Hale La‘au (Frame House), 1821

The Hale La‘au is oldest wood-frame structure still standing in the Hawaiian Islands. It was pre-fabricated and shipped around Cape Horn from Boston in 1820. The Frame House was used as a communal home by many missionary families who shared it with island visitors and boarders. Hiram Bingham, Gerrit P. Judd and Elisha Loomis, and their families are amongst its residents.

## Parlor (Ground Floor)

To the right, as you enter Hale La‘au, is a small parlor space, which once served as a schoolhouse. Here, missionaries and their families would gather to study scripture and Hawaiian language/culture, pray, sing, and worship. They would also host guests from the surrounding community, including Hawaiians who lived on the compound, as well as ali‘i and government officials. A choral rendition of Hawai‘i Aloha serves as a soundtrack for the space. The song, a revered anthem for Hawaiians and Hawai‘i-residents alike, was written by missionary Lorenzo Lyons, fondly known as Makua Laiana, who arrived to Hawai‘i in 1832.

## KAHI CHING

*Ka ‘Uhane O Na Iwi Kūpuna*  
(*The Spirit of Ancestral Remains*), 2019  
steel, wood, soil, coconut fiber

“

Kānaka ‘ōiwi (Native Hawaiians) strongly believe that iwi kūpuna (bones of ancestors) are what connects them to their kulāiwi (ancestral lands). Pre-contact, our kulāiwi were where we would keep our kūpuna safe. Since foreign contact (disease/depopulation, seizure of lands, and illegal overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom), many families have been displaced from their kulāiwi, which are now referred to as “unmarked burials” after “accidental” excavations.

I hope one day that the ignorant will be educated, and kulāiwi will be regarded and treated with the same manner and respect as Western burial sites.

This piece is a visual reminder that ka ‘uhane o na iwi kūpuna exists and CANNOT be forgotten, especially as time is moving us toward inevitable increased urbanization.

**Hawai‘i Aloha**

E Hawai‘i e ku‘u one hānau e  
 Ku‘u home kulaīwi nei  
 ‘Oli nō au i nā pono lani ou  
 E Hawai‘i, aloha ē

*O Hawai‘i, O sands of my birth  
 My native home  
 I rejoice in the blessings of heaven  
 O Hawai‘i, aloha*

**Guest Bedroom (Ground Floor)**

As you enter Hale La‘au, to the left is the guest bedroom. A frequent guest of the missionaries, it is said that Ka‘ahumanu, Kuhina Nui (Queen Regent) at the time, stayed in this room when visiting. Ka‘ahumanu was instrumental to the abolishment of the kapu system in 1819 and was a staunch supporter of the missionaries and their religion. From 1825 until her death in 1832, Ka‘ahumanu proselytized throughout the Islands, proclaiming the new kapu against murder, adultery, Hawaiian religious practices, hula, chant, ‘awa and distilleries.

**JERRY VASCONCELLOS**

*Kou Head*, 2019  
 kou wood

**NANEA LUM**

*Ka ‘ōlelo no ke Akua*, 2019  
 kapa, embroidery floss, charcoal ink

“

The word of god, translated from Hebrew into the Hawaiian language by Christian missionaries, affected the people of Hawai‘i with the subjectification of value and belief systems. The Hawaiian oral tradition communicates everything that is sensible, historical, epistemological, and supernatural. The ways in which the Hawaiian language changed the effect of its communication in the world first became apparent in 1825, after the printing press was brought to Hawai‘i by missionaries. Before contact with Western Imperialism, Hawaiians practiced their spiritual philosophies in harmony with diverse communities and with respect of the power of spirituality and belief.

*I ka ‘ōlelo no ke ola, i ka ‘ōlelo nō ka make.*

In the language there is life, in the language there is death.

In this ‘ōlelo no‘eau (Hawaiian proverb), the power of the word is observed, the belief systems that are perpetuated through Hawaiian oral tradition are in respect of the power that our words have in the world. Everything that is spoken is in contention with what is to be manifested from that word.



# Hale La'au (Frame House), 1821

## Domestic Arts Space (Upstairs)

Views on the status and role of women, sexuality, and the body were amongst some of the societal norms that greatly divided Hawaiians and missionaries. In traditional Hawaiian society, nudity was not considered sexual. Clothing was designed to provide warmth and protection and not as a way to cover the body from shame. Post-contact, Hawaiian women were taught the domestic arts, in part, to cover their nudity. They also learned the Western ideals of the female, including the four pillars of womanhood: piety, purity, domesticity, and submissiveness.

This upstairs space features selections from CONTACT artists whose artistic practices push the boundaries of the domestic arts by challenging traditional societal norms and gender roles. Works in kapa (Hawaiian bark cloth), traditionally considered women's work in Hawaiian society, are also included in this selection.

**MICHELLE CONLEY-HARADA**

*Palm Mall*, 2019, mixed-media weaving

*Lovely Planet*, 2018, mixed-media embroidery on felt

*Sherbert Land*, 2018, mixed media embroidery on felt

*Hawaiian Sky*, 2019, mixed-media floor loom

(outside entrance to space)

“

Nail polish, lip gloss, and hair accessories were removed in a fervor by grubby fingers and baby teeth. As a child and for a good while after, I scorned conventionally feminine objects and behaviors. I despised being told how to act merely due to something I had no control over. I much preferred spending my days outside scraping my knees on the pavement into bright strawberries, catching lizards with my bare hands and pondering how much better my life would be if I was a boy. It took me years to realize that my dissatisfaction was not a product of my physical sex, but rather a weariness of perhaps well-meaning yet limiting advice on what I could or could not do based on societal norms surrounding the role of being a woman.

Despite confusing and occasionally damaging events that took place in my younger years, I still view that period of time with immense comfort in comparison to being an adult in the present day. My childhood was free from thoughts of environmental and governmental catastrophes, not because events of that manner did not occur throughout my youth, but rather because I could not grasp their ramifications. Thus, dwelling on the relics of media from the past as an adult serves as a form of twisted, grotesque escapism. Each time I partake in

“

remembering or creating objects that reference the past, the objective qualities of how I felt during that period of my life then decay further and further.

In using my childhood memories as a distraction from things I should be more concerned about, I've warped that period of time into a plush, dream-like fantasy, to the point that even things that repulsed me as a kid, I now view with fondness. I wish to embrace the activities and materials I shunned as a child, not because I think they are particularly appealing now, but rather because the revulsion I felt toward them solidified them in my memory. So perhaps my work is about the nostalgia I feel when I recall the things that once offended me, things that were of little consequence in comparison to the things which disgust me today.

**REBECCA MARIA GOLDSCHMIDT**

*Laing: Wisdom or Smart or Learning?, 2018*  
various fibers, jute, sugarcane, horsetail,  
digital inkjet prints

“

In pre-colonial Philippines, textiles were traded and highly valued. The spinner and the weaver were skilled and well-regarded, and wealth in textiles equaled wealth in gold. Ilokano inabel, made from cotton that was growing before the Spanish arrived in 1572, was used as ceremonial cloth, clothing, currency, and later as sails on the galleons that moved goods and people from Acapulco to Manila. Working with plant fibers allows for a direct connection to my ancestors as well as place, which I am exploring alongside my studies of the Ilokano language. This is my first weaving, an ode to the sampler, the cornucopia, and the textile practices that have been affected, stunted, manipulated, and hybridized by various colonial and missionary interventions — as well as by the innovation of native weavers who maintain the practice today.

**PAGE CHANG**

*Kapa Pukapuka, 2019*  
wauke fiber

“

*Kapa Pukapuka* is an exercise in humility. It is a painstaking process that I have yet to master. In the 20-plus hours it took to pick apart the fibers, after cultivating the trees for up to two years, and then pounding them into kapa, it made me reflect on my ancestors — the women who spent a thousand years perfecting their craft and the massive industry which was kapa making, clothing the entire lāhui (the Hawaiian nation).

## PAGE CHANG

*Maikohā, He Pūko'a Kina 'Āina, 2019*  
wauke fiber, lava rock

“

This is an ahu (altar) to honor Maikohā, the āumakua (deified ancestor) of the wauke (mulberry) tree. It is said that from his body grew the first wauke tree that his daughters turned into kapa (Hawaiian bark cloth). I used the ‘ōlelo no’eau (Hawaiian proverbs) “He Pūko'a Kina 'Āina,” which literally means: the coral that grows into land. It is used to describe a person beginning in a small way, gaining steadily until she becomes firmly established. I was given the name Pūko'a in my 20s by my father, because he said I’m always growing and creating.

Maikohā is the god of wauke, and I use this analogy to describe the practice of kapa making returning to our people, and slowly growing into something new for the next generations of kapa makers. On my altar, I have created a pūko'a solely from the wauke tree — its fibers for kapa, its inner bark and outer bark, and its branches — using this ancient and traditional material in a new and modern way.

HALE LĀ'AU *domestic arts space*



# Hale La‘au (Frame House), 1821

HALE LĀAU *bedrooms*

## Bedrooms (Upstairs)

Desks in each of the upstairs bedrooms are populated with objects that relate to the lives and contributions of Hiram Bingham and Gerrit P. Judd. Bingham was the leader of the first group of missionaries, who arrived in 1820. A jack-of-all-trades with grand visions for the mission in Hawai‘i, he drew the initial designs for Kawaiahao Church, which was constructed between 1836–1842. Judd was a missionary and a physician. He was known for incorporating la‘au lapa‘au (Hawaiian medicinal knowledge) with Western medical practices to treat his patients.

**KAMRAN SAMIMI**

*Kailua-Kona, 2019*  
archival pigment print

HALE LĀAU *bedrooms*

“

Recent advents in technology allow for a global interconnection through access to imagery of remote locations. This has allowed new vantage points of familiar places, enriching our understanding of the world we think we know.

In the ongoing series *Augmented Topography*, topographic textures from satellite imagery are used to create abstract compositions, unearthing a spiritual element of these places that would otherwise remain unseen. Commissioned for **CONTACT 2019: Acts of Faith, Kona Coast** examines the geography of Kailua-Kona to Kealakekua Bay, where missionaries first landed in Hawai‘i on April 4, 1820. When viewed from a distance, we’re provided with a glimpse of the coastline as it once was. Upon closer inspection, however, the image reveals the development and change which was a direct result of this historical point of contact.

**KAMRAN SAMIMI**

*Suiseki*, 2018  
basalt

HALE LĀAU bedrooms

“

Named after the Japanese tradition of stone appreciation, these four stones are from a larger body of work, which focuses on the manipulation of small basalt boulders. Dissections and reconfigurations of the stone slices create a sense of movement, growth and expansion, while revealing each stone's innate beauty. The resulting objects possess a bold quietness, which inspires contemplation and introspection.

Symbolic of ‘āina (land), literally translated to “that which feeds,” *Suiseki* is the result of an artist’s collaboration with nature. Each stone is listened to and considered before it is portioned, divided, and recombined. Systems of private land ownership were introduced post-contact and were based on the Western concept of land’s commodification to create a potential source of profit. Previously, the kuleana (responsibility) of land stewardship was given to the ali‘i (chiefly class). Those who worked the land were the maka‘āinana (commoners). The health of the land and the health of the people were seen as directly interrelated.

**ULUWEHI KANG**

*Nights in Pink Satin*, 2019  
embroidery on machine-stitched satin

“

*Nights in Pink Satin* was a part of Uluwehi Kang’s installation, *Heartbreak Haven: a confrontation with the Real in a hotel room* (Ewa Hotel Waikīkī, 2016).

The project called attention to the underside of paradise: as a show, a stage, a sadness, and its aura of absurdity — both historic and stagnant. *Nights in Pink Satin* features embroidered text, sourced and screwed from film, and feel-good songs. It serves as a script, subtly cutting through the overt sweetness of the surrounding fabric.

Presented on an antique bed frame at the Hawaiian Mission Houses, *Nights in Pink Satin* asks us to consider Hawai‘i in the imagination of the missionaries — native lands ripe for puritanical utopian possibilities, God’s kingdom on Earth, civilized savages living in perfect harmony with one another.

## OLIVIER KONING

Awa, 2016

photographic print

HALE LĀAU *bedrooms*

“

Hawaiians traditionally offered ‘awa to visitors in ceremony as a form of hospitality. It would be served in a coconut shell cup with a small banana to offset the bitter taste.

‘Awa hiwa was probably most favored by Hawaiians for medicinal uses. Both the roots and leaves were boiled and used in various preparations to treat insomnia, kidney disorders, muscle stiffness and pain, and headaches. A non-narcotic sedative, contemporaries supplied astronauts with ‘awa/kava in lieu of sleeping pills because the side effects are fewer and less severe.

Part of the photographic series *The First Hawaiians*, ‘Awa is less botanical study and more narrative portrait. The plant is photographed to highlight its singular vitality and personality. This series aims to see these plants incorporated into our daily lives again.



# Hale La‘au (Frame House), 1821

## Dr. Judd's Depository (Basement)

The re-creation of Dr. Judd's Dispensatory takes us back to the Western medical practices of the early 1830s and the types of materials he had on hand to treat his patients. It allows us to interpret the medical content in which Dr. Judd interacted with Native Hawaiians and the ways in which he changed his own practice in light of Native Hawaiian medical knowledge.

Installed in the depository is artist Tiare Ribeaux's Pele and Plastiglomerates, which calls attention to the growing problem of plastic pollution in our Islands. Ribeaux considers plastiglomerates as an invasion of toxic (colonial) substances that have melded with Pele's sacred and spiritual body (the land), as a metaphor for the loss of native spiritual beliefs with the introduction of settler-colonialist value systems. Profit and capital are prioritized over the health of the land and its people.

HALE LĀAU *dr. judd's depository*

## TIARE RIBEAUX

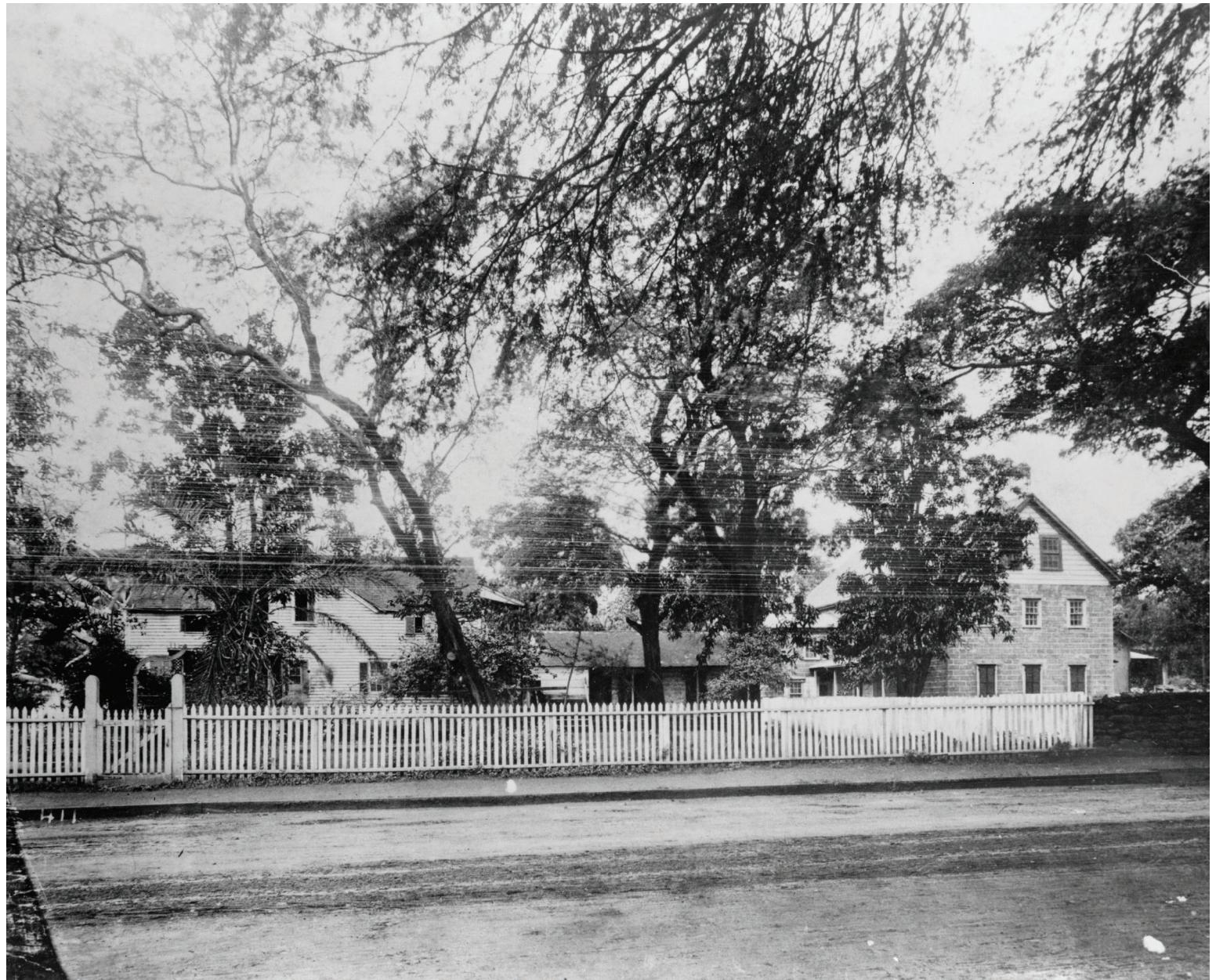
*Pele and Plastiglomerates*, 2019  
two-channel video, 3D-printed sculpture,  
bioplastics, chiffon

“

This project considers the mediation of Hawai‘i Island via technological monitoring, and plastiglomerate, a new geological layer discovered in Kamilo Beach in 2012 that was formed by plastic washed ashore from the ocean melted with sand and rock to form a new conglomerate. The lava rocks on Hawai‘i are associated with the Hawaiian volcano goddess Pelehonuamea and her sacred body. As researchers and geologists have mostly focused on plastiglomerate as being a marker of the Anthropocene, they have never considered the spiritual connections it has to Hawai‘i and its native peoples. Plastiglomerate can be seen from a perspective of the invasion of the melding of toxic/colonial and petrochemical substances with Pele’s sacred and spiritual body, and as a metaphor for the loss of native spiritual beliefs with the continuous arrival of settler-colonialists, and their new materials and technologies.

As an extension of techno-colonialism, satellite monitoring through LIDAR and InSAR imaging actively shoot lasers on the land to detect surface deformations at Kilauea’s summit, Halema‘uma‘u and Pu‘u O‘o craters — another invasion of Pele’s sacred body as this technology attempts to predict her next movements. Yet as a force of nature, she can never be fully predicted.

HALE LĀAU *dr. judd's depository*



**NICOLE NAONE + MITCHEL VIERNES***He Kalaoke no Mākua, 2019*

single-channel video projection

## PROJECTIONS

**ALEC SINGER***Floating on Your Grave, 2019*

three-channel video projection

“

Post-Egyptian exodus, God provides Moses with instructions on appropriate promise land behavior:

*“The land must not be sold permanently, because the land is mine and you reside in my land as foreigners and strangers. Throughout the land that you hold as a possession, you must provide for the redemption of the land.”*

— Leviticus 25:23-24

In this site-specific projection, Naone pairs footage of the 1983 Mākua Valley evictions with oli corresponding to its ahupua'a. She calls attention to the intimate and reciprocal relationship between kānaka (the people) and ‘āina (land) in a Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) worldview, as well as the displacement of Native Hawaiians and dispossession of homelands.

“

After investigating the stories of spirits on the grounds of the Mission Houses and being visited by them in dreams, it became inevitable that I share the essence of their existence. These spirits are neither malicious nor angelic, but like you and I and the people in our lives, are equally weighted in this world. They do not dance on the graves of our elders but float freely between our realm and theirs.

This is a collaboration with Madelyn Biven, a local performance artist and spirit in her own right.

Alec Singer is currently an investigator that uses deductive and intuitive techniques to experiment with projection and multi-disciplinary installation projects.

Madelyn Biven uses language of the body to perform, teach, and research movement-based work.

**ARA LAYLO***Falling Water, 2019*

single-channel video projection

**PETER SHAINDLIN**  
BERLIN, 2017

## PROJECTIONS

“

Beyond empirical religious connotations, acts of faith apply to less formalized values, but often of equal importance. Perhaps more than any other city besides Rome or Byzantium, Berlin has contained within its confines every imaginable manifestation of faith, from the sublime to the ridiculous, and from the spiritual to faith in evil itself. What remains miraculously intact is humanity. There is a darkness over the city, even on the brightest of days, the shadow of emotional purgatory and undefinable loss. Against such a backdrop, the nude may represent purification, statues and edifices, hope, and nature, the Aristotelian dogma of the universal whole.

*"Faith makes blessed."*

— Friedrich Nietzsche

**NA.PALM**

*Better Luck Next Time*, 2018–2036  
mixed-media/performance

“

*Better Luck Next Time* is a call-to-action narrative, performance piece produced by Maxfield Smith & Alec Singer for their cult known as The Cult of Leisure and Longevity. It is meant to illustrate the allure and absurdity of the Evangelical archetype. The piece is a continuation of an experiment in installation work that has been previously produced by the two in shows such as *Medium*, *The Last Dollar You Have & The Fortune You Find* (2019), and *Tomorrow Takes Forever* (2017).

**MARQUES HANALEI MARZAN***Edge of Tomorrow*, 2019

reed, feathers, raffia cloth, stain

SITE GROUNDS

**JASON SELLEY***Ex nihilo*, 2019

latex, vantablack, helium, fish net

“ “  
*Edge of Tomorrow* references the hale wai ea (ceremonial house) used in protocols on the heiau (temple). The only known extant example currently resides in the Weltmuseum in Vienna. It functioned as a spiritual conduit, and the cord used to wrap and activate the heiau was stretched from its location. It reminds us of the rigid spiritual intentions our ancestors valued juxtaposed with the Western religious beliefs and values brought to Hawai‘i by the missionaries presented at the Hawaii Mission Houses Museum.

“ “  
*Ex nihilo* is an exploration of the act of creation coming from nothing. It explores our inability to conceive absolute nothingness — transcendental goals and values — and looks at how a person’s behavior in this world becomes oriented to his/her fate in the next.

## CHLOE AMOS

*Oh! How I Want to See Hawaii!, 2019*  
performance (opening night only)

“

What might have happened if ‘Ōpūkaha‘ia was ever able to return to Hawai‘i after his years spent away from home? This inquiry sparks an exploration: of home, of how to depart and return again, how to re-situate oneself inside a changed and changing landscape, and of how to track the arc of change over time in search of a path forward. Many people in Hawai‘i today, both native and non-native, have had to leave for various reasons, sometimes returning and trying to recall how the past led into a transformed present in order to reorient themselves. This dance physically negotiates the necessity and impossibility of fully tracing how aspects of home become rearranged, punctuated by moments that get lost in the gaps of memory. Viewers are invited to join in, creating an archive of the occurrence of change throughout the piece by drawing and/or writing down moments that catch their attention.

SITE GROUNDS



**2019-00**

**MAILE ANDRADE**

*Enter-twine*, 2018

washi, bookbinding, mokuhanga

“

**2019-01**

**TAMARA LEIOKANOE MOAN**

*Voyage of Rediscovery*, 2019

risograph print, stamps, stencil, colored pencil

“

The launching of the Hawaiian voyaging canoe Hōkūleʻa in 1976 can arguably be seen as an outgrowth of the first Protestant missionaries coming to Hawaiʻi in 1820 — both of these ocean journeys being collective acts of faith. After generations of missionary suppression of their culture in service to Christianity, Hawaiians in the 1960s and 1970s began to reclaim their cultural heritage through language, hula, crafts, and wayfinding. Hōkūleʻa’s voyages continue to push into unknown territories that require faith. My book explores the intersection of the canoe’s path with my personal act of faith, my move in 1986 to root my life in the Islands.

**2019-02**

**BRADY EVANS**

*49, Book One and Two*, 2019

inkjet print on paper

“

My grandmother used to tell me that it takes 49 days for a soul to reach heaven after death. During that period, they wander about in a kind of limbo. She had many first-hand accounts of supernatural encounters growing up in Lahaina, and this became fodder as I wrote and illustrated comics of my own. I find it fascinating that her ghostly experiences are consistent with the prevailing religions and beliefs around her: Japanese, Hawaiian, Catholic, Protestant, and so on, all mixed together all at once. For example, a ghost appears at her doorway without legs, a Japanese belief; a fireball, akualele, shoots out from a neighbor's house, which is also known as a hinotama in Japanese. *49* loosely draws from my grandmother's stories, and depicts a soul's departure from Earth to the beyond.

**2019-03**

**PAULA M. NOKES**

*Staircases*, 2019

artist book from drypoint and chine-collé

“

Having good intentions to do the right thing encourages one to take that first step into the un-known.

Stairs are primarily perceived as going up, furnishing symbols for ascents in slow stages and transitions through difficult steps. When difficult things present themselves in life — as they always do — we trust and mount the first step, often with trepidation.

The other aspect of this work is the vertical structures of houses of faith with spires, inviting one on a journey to the stillness of a transcendent inner dimension.

**2019-04**

**JOSHUA TOLLEFSON**

*Oracles*, 2019

altered books; found books, 'alaea salt, sea salt

“

My work utilizes found books, in which multiple meanings and readings are possible. In part, I am referencing biblical books, specifically the old and new testaments. Salt represents the effects of time and corrosion, both metaphorically and literally, as well as the sea and tears shed. The red 'alaea salt is made from the colorful volcanic soil of Hawai'i. In this way, the books, which are otherwise identical, embody two versions of the same volume. The red salt is symbolic of the bible in translation, developing the Acts of Faith theme in context of the English and Hawaiian languages.

**2019-05**

**FRED TAKAKUWA**

*Stamp Trilogy*, 2019

risograph on white paper

“

In my past endeavors, I have worked mostly in glass, ceramic, and printmaking. For the present work, I used previous woodcut prints and adapted them risograph print. Risography is a mechanical combination of xeroxing and screen printing. The resulting artist book is titled Stamp Trilogy, which is composed of four pages in three colors plus black. This publication is printed on white- and cream-colored papers in an edition size of five each.

2019-06

**DIANA NICHOLLETTE JEON**

*Signs of Faith*, 2019

Altoids tin, frames, archival prints, wax

“

Acts of faith do not always look like prayers or what one might think of as such.

Sometimes one endures while they hover in silence, sometimes one must dive in and hold fast, sometimes one must blindly follow the signs one thinks they are receiving while following the voice of a higher power.

Sometimes one pays a price for holding fast to one's faith, as when the Hawaiians were silenced by the missionaries and subsequent American overthrow.

2019-07

**RENEE IIJIMA**

*A Letter from St. Francis*, 2019

color Xerox, laser print, mulberry paper

“

We need many acts of faith, every moment, every day.

We live in a time, in which we must make an effort to find unity, balance, compassion and integrity. At the core of many religions are two truths: the One essence that unites us all and the importance of being a good human being. These truths are often obscured by custom and interpretation.

This book describes the qualities and the process that can bring us closer to the love that St. Francis practiced in his life. As he once said, “A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows.”

**2019-08**

**ROGER BONG**

*16 streams of consciousness as predictive text*, 2019

Apple Notes app in iPhone SE with predictive text

“

In placing our trust in Dataism, our interactions with artificial intelligence allow new forms of expression to exist. Will these forms ever replace purely human expression? Can they complement our existence as human beings? Who might we become when we allow algorithms to predict who we are?

*16 streams* is a tongue-in-cheek collection of flow state poems created by using the predictive text function on an iPhone. The absurd, unintelligible results may or may not reveal anything about the author.

**2019-09**

**SCOTT FITZEL**

*Genesis/Kinohi*, 2019

sacred text

“

From Darkness Comes Light, origins align in the first lines. The emergence of ao (light) from pō (darkness), from the formless, dark and cold abyss comes the first glimmer of light and life. From there, the divergence of interpretation begins. But at the moment of conception, as Mahina Muku (darkened new moon) transitions to Hilo (first appearance of the new crescent moon), there is a shared belief in the creation of everything.

**2019-10**

**STAR PADILLA**

*Labour of Love*, 2019

pencil, watercolors, watercolor papers,  
mounted in journal

“

*Labour of Love* is part of my ongoing series of artworks called EXTINCT, in which I explore the theme in relation to the natural world, cultural heritage and practices, and to the sixth mass global extinction currently happening on Earth. I have been documenting bird species I see through observation for more than ten years, I have started a fish and coral log, and with this book, I have begun recording plants I see. These are my acts of faith.

My artist book is a collection of hand-painted watercolors from photographs taken at Waimea Valley, Mānoa Falls Trail, Queen Kapiʻolani Garden, my lanai garden, and the Limahuli National Tropical Botanical Garden on Kauaʻi. The order of the book is not intentional; it is the order in which I completed each piece, with the newest one first. Preservation, conservation, dedication, honor, history, and love help native Hawaiian plants survive, but all gardeners and botanists cultivate culture, life, and creation with each careful seeding, planting, and watering.

**2019-11**

**JARED WICKWARE**

*Anthology*, 2019

engraving on copper

“

It's said that new converts are the most devout. *Anthology* is a collection of works done since my arrival here in 1995, specifically since my departure from the Navy in 2003 until the present. During that time, I have devoted much of my artistic efforts interpreting my Hawaiian experience in terms of place and culture. I believe that each one of these works, like most art, constitutes an Act of Faith in itself, as does this compilation. The actual prints themselves, originally conceived, engraved on copper, and printed front and back.

**2019-12**

**DALANI TANAHY**

*A Woman of Faith*, 2019

handmade book, kapa, paper

“

As a descendant of missionary families, not only from the ABCFM [American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions], but also from the early Church of Latter-Day Saints, I have been a witness to acts of faith all my life. My maternal grandmother, who is the subject of my book, influenced our family in so many ways that almost 30 years after her passing, my cousins and I still can hear her gentle but insistent voice in our minds. We know all these stories because in true kupuna style, she shared them with us every chance she could, and her stories are our precious narratives now.

**2019-13**

**SHEANAE TAM**

*Conversion*, 2019

mixed media

“

These hands are uniting, coming together to pray, but in an aggressive and tense manner — similar to the reaction of the Hawaiian people to Western contact. There was a unison of culture and exchange of goods, which proved beneficial at first. The missionaries brought literacy, education, and a new religion, but also brought an immense change in faith to the Hawaiian people.

The inside of the hands has snippets of the Bible in Hawaiian, representing the abolishment of the kapu system, culture, and the ongoing battle of conversions Hawai‘i has faced since then. The hands ultimately represent a resistance to change, yet they are inevitably being consumed by the environment and pressing material.

2019-14

**ALLISON ROSCOE**

*The Beginning*, 2019

handmade kozo paper

“

Ancient spiritual works were recorded and kept in the scroll form. Hawaiians had an oral culture, so I have imagined the beginning of Hawai‘i with a fiery eruption that became land and blue skies and clear water and oceans. The love and reverence for the ‘āina have suffered due to contact with the West. With new awareness, this process may be reversed.

2019-15

**ALLISON ROSCOE**

*Resting Together*, 2019

paper, rubbings

“

These gravestone rubbings are from Nu‘uanu Cemetery. The cemetery holds many different spiritual ideas from a wide variety of cultures. This cemetery is a quiet, peaceful repository of O‘ahu’s past 200 years. The many different languages, spiritual sentiments, cultures, and artwork coexist in a beautiful landscape.

2019-16

**REBECCA MARIA GOLDSCHMIDT**

*Filipino Woman*, 2019

archival inkjet print, onion skin paper

“

This book is a collection of newspaper articles from the early decades of the Territory of Hawai‘i, when Filipino men imported to work on the sugarcane plantations outnumbered Filipina women about 7 to 1. Whether victims or perpetrators of these “crimes,” we must read closely to consider the surrounding pressures and contexts in which these women found themselves. For the woman who kidnaps a white baby, who practices traditional medicine, or tries to commit suicide: what is her version of the story? These clippings offer historical perspective on the problems facing our community today: high rates of domestic violence, mental health issues, sex trafficking, and the ways in which Filipina women continue to be oversexualized in the media.

2019-17

**BRADY EVANS**

*Speaking Stones: a short story*, 2019

inkjet print on paper

“

As a child growing up in Honolulu, I remember making a few trips to a Japanese cemetery in Nu‘uanu, where my great-grandmother is buried. While my parents and grandparents were Christian, there were still many Buddhist religious practices we observed; for example, certain death anniversaries and actions like washing the black granite grave stones. I considered this mixing of religions normal and only realized, as an adult, which practices originated from which culture. Stones are revered in both Hawaiian and Japanese customs, and I wanted to write a story that drew both from Japanese death practices and beliefs as well as the idea that there is life in the stones we come in contact with in our daily lives.

My stories are inspired from first-hand accounts retold to me by my family elders, in particular, my grandmother who had many supernatural encounters growing up in Lahaina in the 1940s. I find it fascinating that her ghostly experiences are consistent with the prevailing religions and beliefs around her: Japanese, Hawaiian, Catholic, and so on, all mixed together all at once. Her stories are a starting off point as I combine my personal experiences to create something that is connected to the past but still malleable enough to be influenced by the present.

**2019-18**

**NOELLE M.K.Y. KAHANU  
HINA KAHANU**

*La'ikū ka leo: Meditating on a lifetime of poems*, 2019  
Paper, thread, polyester batting

“

When my mom died, she left behind dozens of boxes filled with a half century of writing — poetry, stories, and songs about “small-kid-time,” 60s/70s activism, her life as a single parent, love, intimacy, anger, solitude, and loss. Ultimately, she wrote about being a Japanese-American woman in love with the Wai'anae mountains at sunset. Picking through her pages, I cried about the times I was the mean child; the missing child; the only child. In this collaborative act, I sought solace for the both of us, reconciling our birthing with our becoming as I crumpled, smoothed, and sewed her words into zabuton — each cushion representing a different phase of her life/our lives.

*These cushions are meant to be held, touched, and read.*

**2019-19**

**NĀ HAUMĀNA O KE KULA 'O  
SAMUEL M. KAMAKAU**

*'O Pāhu'a a me Kaikua'ana*, 2019  
paper, comb bind

“

These stories, retold by the 5th-grade haumāna (students) at Ke Kula 'o Samuel M. Kamakau, were shared with them by kumu and historian Kaipo'i Kelling, who has taught at Kawaiahā'o School for over 20 years.

Now at Kamakau, Kaipo'i has shared origin stories from the Hawaiian perspective around the introduction of the pī'āpā (alphabet) through Henry Āpūkaha'ia and the anticipated coming of missionaries to the plains of Kou (Honolulu town), to “settle” on lands prepared for them by Hewahewa, the kahuna of Keōpūolani, the first wife of Kamehameha I.

The haumāna have listened; and they now interpret through illustrations, as well as 'ōlelo Hawai'i and 'ōlelo haole, the narrative they understand and will continue to share.

**2019-20**

**UHM PRINTMAKING, ART 318**

*Places and Object*, 2019

lithography

“

Someone is rolling down Tantalus without braking, touching a rock and asking permission, pouring water over the head of Jizo, driving by a sign announcing the second coming, recalling the vestibule of a childhood home. Does human existence require a sense of the sacred? We looked for places, objects, practices of the sacred in these Islands. We gathered images reflecting something larger than the self. Something outside the present. Something beyond the market.

Perhaps human life on Earth is an accident. We act as though it is not, as though it matters, as though forces beyond understanding are present.

**2019-21**

**LILA LEE**

*Nots Landing*, 2019

TreeVisions, Moke Life, The Tennyson Corporation, Shitty Kids

“

A little piece of wood with wheels can ignite an unimaginable amount of happiness or the worst amount of pain everywhere in your body at once. Trusting that object but, more so, trusting your ability, is an act of faith. The board is merely a physical representation of perseverance, patience, determination, discipline; a reminder that nothing good comes easy. That process is what this zine shows.

All images are of Hawai‘i skateboarders, skating locations in Hawai‘i.

**2019-22**

**THAD HIGA**

*Jesus Was a Gook*, 2019  
paper, mixed-media

“

Is Christianity more culture than it is a religion? Can religion coexist or enhance culture, or must it always act as colonizer, warping, usurping, and deleting what came before? Multicultural Hawai‘i provides a safe enough space for Asian-Americans to let go of their ancestral roots, rites, and traditions. In the void of racial and cultural identity, Americanized Christianity easily takes root. *JWAG* is a personal essay about how religious whitewashing becomes a mechanism for voluntary self-erasure. The obscuration and frenetic collaging of images and type parallel the process of synthesizing new (or old) identities in the age of information overload.

**2019-23**

**DEVIN OISHI**

*Illuminations*, 2019  
Bible, ink

“

When Keōpūolani, Liholiho, and Kauikeaouli knew that Hawaiian society had to change to survive contact with the West, can you imagine the act of faith required to turn away from generations of tradition? To further reinforce the Kingdom of Hawai‘i, they encouraged learning the written word through the Bible. In one generation, 92% of the population was literate in their native tongue. No other society has ever matched this. It is my hope to find/create a bible that has gone through many hands and carries the mana‘o (ideas) and na‘au (intuition) of all those who have interacted with god through it.

*Visitors are encouraged to interact with the book by highlighting favorite passages or by writing notes, thoughts, or reflections on scriptures on the pages and in the margins. You may add illustrations or post-its if we run out of space or feel more comfortable.*

2019-24

## KAU'I CHUN

*Ola: The Healing Touch Shroud*, 2019

Mylar, ink, pōhaku, wiliwili, bamboo

“

*Ola: The Healing Touch Shroud* is a book layered with the sacred text, imprinted with the mana (energy) of Native Hawaiian healing-touch practitioners from the Nānākuli Community Health Center.

After the healers finished with their patients, I coated their hands with fingerprint ink and asked them to press and impart their mana onto these sheets of frosted Mylar.

In contact, and just under the kilohana (top layer), are pōhaku (basalt stones) embedded with coral from Ka Iwi coast, my walking stick from a dying wiliwili tree, and an endemic Hawaiian ‘ohe (bamboo) gifted to me by Isabella Aiona Abbott. (Abbott is the author of *Lā'au Hawai'i: Traditional Hawaiian Uses of Plants*.) Tied to the ‘ohe is a piece of ‘aha niu (coconut cordage) made by the Micronesian family of master voyager Mau Piailug and gifted to a navigator at Hālau Lōkahī PCS.

These sacred objects represent our fragile ‘āina (land), wherein lies the mana of our kūpuna (ancestors) protected by *Ola: The Healing Touch Shroud*.



# **ART TOURS + WALKS**

FREE TO THE PUBLIC

## **CONTACT DAILY TOURS**

Tuesday–Saturday • 11:30am, 12:30pm, 1:30pm, 2:30pm

Meet at in Multipurpose Room at Hawaiian Mission Houses for a docent-led tour. Also available by appointment; email [info@contacthawaii.com](mailto:info@contacthawaii.com).

## **WALK #6: MISSION BY 88 BLOCK WALKS**

April 20 + May 4 • 7pm–9pm

88 Block Walks presents Walk #6: Mission, a walking tour of the Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site featuring live music, performance, and multimedia projections by CONTACT artists. This hour-long tour invites participants to experience an alternate version of the grounds, transformed by large-scale visual interventions that reimagine the physical and emotional geography of Western religion in Hawai‘i. Observations of 19th-century missionaries transpose with the reflections of contemporary artists, as we explore the effects of faith, culture, and colonization on our understanding of place. Meet at in Multipurpose Room at Hawaiian Mission Houses. More info: [88blockwalks.com](http://88blockwalks.com) + [contacthawaii.com](mailto:contacthawaii.com).

*Tour led by Adele Balderston. Music by Emily Inouye Lau*

88 BLOCK WALKS is an ongoing series of walking tours exploring themes of gentrification, displacement, urbanization and generational change within Kaka‘ako’s cultural, historical and physical landscape.

## **ALL THAT MATTERS x CONTACT: ZINE WORKSHOP**

April 27 • 1pm–4pm

Get familiar with zine culture by collaging your own zines and collaborating in a printed All That Matters group zine project. The Zine Workshop will be centered around the Acts of Faith theme and the context of the Hawaiian Mission Houses. Suggested tools and materials (helpful but not required): X-ACTO knife, scissors, self-healing cutting mat, old magazines, and glue stick. Meet at in Multipurpose Room at Hawaiian Mission Houses.

ALL THAT MATTERS is a series of free, all-ages events and workshops geared towards youth activation through the arts and culture.

## **CONTACT WALKABOUTS**

April 13, 20, 27, May 4 • 2:30–3:30pm

Do you know where you are? Join artists Adele Balderston of 88 Block Walks and Thad Higa of Hawai‘i Zine & Book Library for a WALKABOUT through the Hawai‘i Historical Capital District and Kaka‘ako. Part walking tour, part counter-mapping workshop, WALKABOUT invites participants to experience the neighborhood in a brand new way — and record the journey in idiosyncratic maps. Choose from a variety of experimental navigation and field-mapping tools and consult with readings from artists’ research at the Hawaiian Mission Houses Archives. Meet at the Multipurpose Room at Hawaiian Mission Houses.

# Mahalo Nui Loa

*An Act of Faith*

CONTACT would like to express gratitude to the Hawaiian Mission Houses, in particular Neil V. Hitch, executive director, and Elizabeth Po'oloa, director of operations and exhibitions, who not only welcomed CONTACT when it was displaced, but also let us experiment, play, challenge and critique. We hope that this show paves the way for future contemporary art projects in unexpected places and that Hawai'i's contemporary artists continue to find open doors in the Islands.



Funding provided by Hawai'i Tourism through the Community Enrichment Program



# CONTACT

*Acts of Faith*